FEB 3 1960

DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

VOL. VI NO. 7 | March 29th 1957 | Price: 15 Pf., 5c., 3d

TROOP PACT

Soviet-German Agreement on Stationing Forces

An agreement delimiting the rights of the Soviet troops stationed in the German Democratic Republic was signed in Berlin on March 12th. The agreement emphasised that the Soviet troops were stationed in East Germany temporarily owing to the fact that no peace treaty had yet been signed with Germany, and since the rebirth of German militarism in West Germany was a menace to peace.

The treaty was signed by Foreign Minister Lothar Bolz and Defence Minister Willi Stoph for the German Democratic Republic, and by Foreign Minister A. A. Gromyko and Defence Minister G. K. Zhukov for the Soviet Union.

After the signature of the treaty Soviet Defence Minister G. K. Zhukov reaffirmed that it remained the policy of the Soviet Union to urge the withdrawal of all foreign troops from both East and West Germany. He stated: "In the treaty which we have signed today it is emphasised that the presence of Soviet troops in Germany is of a provisional character. The Soviet Union has repeatedly proposed to the western powers that agreement should be reached on the withdrawal of all foreign troops from German territory. The Soviet Union now proposes once again that the American, Soviet, British and French troops stationed on German territory should be reduced by one third during 1957, and that in the next two years all foreign military bases on the territory of other states should be liquidated. The acceptance of this proposal would provide proper conditions for securing lasting peace in Europe and the solution of the German problem."

The preamble to the treaty on the presence of Soviet troops in the German Democratic Republic stated that such a treaty had been made necessary by the fact that no peace treaty had yet been signed with Germany, and that no agreement had been reached which provided a guarantee of peace and security for the countries of Europe. The contracting partners had taken into consideration the fact that foreign troops are stationed in the (West) German Federal Republic, and that "military

(cont. on next page)

A-BOMBS FOR HITLER GENERALS

The West German Government is pressing for the arming of the West German Wehrmacht with atomic cannon, Chancellor Adenauer stated at a press conference in Bonn on March 22nd. Supreme commander of the West German Wehrmacht is General Adolf Heusinger, formerly Hitler's chief of operations.

West German public opinion has been much aroused by the disclosure early in March that NATO units stationed in West Germany are already equipped with atomic weapons.

WEST GERMANY VOTES IN SEPTEMBER

Thirty-five million West German voters will go to the polls on September 15th to vote in the third West German general election. Only three parties, the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats have much prospect of winning seats, since the West German electoral law lays down that a party must receive five percent of the total valid votes before it can win any seats.

The 600,000 West German voters who voted for the Communist Party at the last general election in 1953 have been in effect disfranchised by the banning of the West German Communist Party in 1956. The Communist newspaper "Freies Volk", which appears illegally in West Germany, has appealed to its former voters to give their votes "to those candidates whose views correspond most closely with our programme."

Voting in West Germany is by a complicated system of proportional representation, by which each voter has a first and second choice. In view of this the Communist party made the following appeal:

"No vote against Adenauer must be wasted. We appeal to voters to use their first vote to support the local candidate whose past record and clear programme gives the best guarantee that he will support a policy of peace and security, and the interests of the workers and the peasants. Voters should give their second vote to the provincial list of that party which intends to make a change in government policy, and which is nearest to the working class."

(cont. from preceding page)

TROOP PACT : FULL DETAILS

bases of the aggressive North Atlantic Block" had been created there; and also the fact that peace was menaced by the rebirth of German militarism in West Germany.

Here are the main paragraphs of the treaty:

Article 1

"The sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic is not infringed by the temporary stationing of Soviet forces on its territory; the Soviet forces will not intervene in the internal affairs of the German Democratic Republic or the social-political life of the country."

Article 2

"1. Questions of alterations in the strength and stationing of the Soviet forces . . . shall be the subject of consultations between the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Government of the USSR.

"2. Manoeuvre areas used by the Soviet forces outside their garrison areas shall be agreed upon with state organs of the German Democratic Republic."

Article 3

"The Soviet forces, the members of these forces and their dependents stationed on the territory of the German Democratic Republic, shall respect and obey the laws of the German Democratic Republic."

Article 4

This article deals in detail with questions of uniform, vehicle registration numbers, driving licences, and traffic laws.

Article 5

"Offences committed by members of the Soviet forces and their dependents . . . shall be dealt with by the authorities of the German Democratic Republic under German law."

Article 6

"The terms of Article 5 of this treaty do not apply:

"a) In the case of offences committed by members of the Soviet forces or their dependents against the USSR or against members of the Soviet forces or their dependents;

"b) In the case of offences committed . . . in the course of their duties.

"In such cases Soviet law will be applied by the authorities of the USSR."

Article 7

"The relevant German and Soviet authorities can request the other partner to hand over or to accept individual cases such as those laid down in Articles 5 and 6. Such applications will be favourably considered."

Article 8

"In the case of offences committed against the Soviet forces and members of those forces . . . those responsible will be treated by the courts and other authorities of the German Democratic Republic in the same manner as if the offences had been committed against the forces of the German Democratic Republic . . ."

Article 9

"1. The relevant German and Soviet authorities shall extend to each other every aid, including legal aid, in the prosecution of offences as defined in Articles 5, 6 and 8."

Paragraph 2 of this article states that action on this subject shall be laid down in a separate agreement.

Article 10

"On the request of the relevant authority of the German Democratic Republic, a member of the Soviet forces who has committed a breach of German law shall be recalled from the territory of the German Democratic Republic."

Articles 11—14

These articles define the responsibility of Soviet authorities to pay compensation for damage done by Soviet forces to public or private property in the German Democratic Republic and the responsibility of the authorities of the Republic for damage caused to Soviet forces or the members thereof. Mixed Soviet-German Commissions will fix the compensation in cases of damage done in the course of military duties, and German courts will have jurisdiction in other cases.

Article 15

"The Government of the German Democratic Republic continues to grant the Soviet forces the right to use barracks, airfields, manoeuvre grounds . . . which are being used by the Soviet forces at the time of signature of this treaty. Exact conditions and terms for the use of these facilities and all services will be laid down in a separate agreement."

Article 16

"The agreement of the relevant state authorities of the German Democratic Republic is necessary for the construction of buildings, airfields, roads . . . for the use of the Soviet forces."

Article 17

"1. When the Soviet forces have no further use for the objects defined in Article 15 they shall be handed over to the German Democratic Republic with no claim for compensation for any building, renovation or improvements of such objects.

"2. Special arrangements shall be made for the settlement of questions arising from the handing over of objects defined in Article 16."

Article 18

"In the case of a threat to the security of the Soviet forces . . . the Supreme Commander of the Soviet forces can take steps to eliminate such a threat after consultations with the Government of the German Democratic Republic and taking into consideration the steps taken by the authorities of the German Democratic Republic."

Article 19

"A mixed German-Soviet commission consisting of three representatives of each party shall be established to settle questions in connection with the interpretation of this agreement. Unanimity between the two partners shall be the principle in the rulings of the commission. The mixed commission shall give itself a statute. The seat of the mixed commission shall be Berlin. If the mixed commission is unable to solve a question, then this question should be speedily solved through diplomatic channels."

Article 20

This article gives legal definitions of the terms 'member of the Soviet forces', 'dependent' etc.

Article 21

"This agreement must be ratified in accordance with the laws of the signatories. It comes into force upon the exchange of notes confirming ratification."

Article 22

"This agreement remains in force . . . for the period of the stationing of Soviet forces on the territory of the German Democratic Republic. It can be amended by the treaty partners by mutual agreement . . ."

"GAITSKELL PLAN" FOR GERMAN UNITY

"Good in Spots" Says E. Berlin Paper

Hugh Gaitskell, British Labour Party leader, proposed that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from both East and West Germany as part of a plan for German unity and European security in a speech in West Berlin on March 18th.

The "Gaitskell Plan" had the following main points:

1. All foreign troops should be withdrawn step-by-step from East and West Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

2. Germany should be reunited on the basis of free elections.

3. A European Security Pact should be concluded to guarantee the territorial integrity of the central European "neutral zone". This pact should be guaranteed by the Soviet Union, USA, Britain and France.

4. West Germany should leave NATO, and Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany should leave the Warsaw Pact.

Enlarging on his plan, Mr Gaitskell said that it could obviously only be put into effect with the cooperation of West Germany. It would not mean the end of NATO, and would not mean the withdrawal of American troops from Europe, since they would remain in Belgium, Holland, France and Britain. He said he was in favour of the recognition of the Oder-Neisse Frontier.

Commenting on the "Gaitskell Plan" the East Berlin newspaper "Neues Deutschland" stated:

"Mr Gaitskell's ideas about the withdrawal of foreign troops from East and West Germany, the formation of a collective security system and the recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier are all right as far as they go. But Mr Gaitskell avoids the core of the problem.

"What should we think, for instance, of his demand for what amounts to a dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, while at the same time NATO is retained in West Europe, and American troops are stationed there? How can collective security be attained under these circumstances?

"Mr Gaitskell made no mention of the main problem: the destruction of the power of German imperialism. Has he forgotten that German imperialism has already twice plunged Europe into a world war, and is now preparing for a third go? He overlooks the fact that the rational ideas in his proposals can only be put into practice in the course of the struggle against German imperialism . . ."

"As leader of the British Labour Party Mr Gaitskell would be well advised to line up with the peace-loving forces of the German people and support them in their struggle against German imperialism and militarism. This means in the first line support for the German Democratic Republic, the anti-imperialist and anti-militarist bulwark of the German people . . .

"If the power of German imperialism is not broken, there can never be a neutral zone in Europe, there can never be peace and collective security. And this power can only be broken if the international workers' movement wages this struggle side by side with the peace forces in Germany. That is the core of the problem, Mr Gaitskell."

The Thousand-Million-Dollar Trade Fair

Business worth nearly one thousand million dollars was done by the German Democratic Republic at the Leipzig Spring Fair from March 3rd to 14th, it was officially announced after the fair had closed.

Provisional figures showed that East German firms had concluded contracts to a value of 2,176 million marks (the East German mark is valued at 2.2 dollars in export and import transactions). A major part of the contracts were for exports to the socialist countries, the value of which was given as 1,372 million marks. With the other half of the world the German Democratic Republic signed agreements for the export of goods valued at 483 million marks.

The spring fair was visited by the record total of over 662,000 people. There were more than 25,000 visitors from West Germany, over 8000 from capitalist foreign countries, and nearly 9000 from socialist countries. Exhibits at the fair came from a total of 40 countries and included a large exhibit of industrial goods from Britain.

Democratic Germany Pulls Weight in Geophysical Year

The German Democratic Republic is one of the 55 states cooperating in the 1957 International Geophysical Year, during which scientists in all parts of the world will make simultaneons measurements and observations of the weather, terrestial magnetism, sun spots and other subjects.

Scientists from East Germany have not been able to participate in the Antarctic expeditions, the most dramatic of the activities during the Geophysical year, but leading scientists from the German Democratic Republic have been invited by the Soviet Union to help staff the research ship "Lomonossov" which will make measurements in the Atlantic between the 15th and 70th degree of longitude. The "Lomonossov" itself, stated to be the largest research ship in the world, was built at Rostock in the German Democratic Republic.

Other specialists from East Germany will travel to the Soviet Union to help in glacier measurements there.

In the Republic itself scientists will cooperate in the world-wide programme in the fields of meteorology, terrestrial magnetism, ionosphere research, and the activity of the sun.

ELDORADO FOR UNDERGROUND

West German Newspaper on "Cloak-and-Dagger" Methods

When a visitor goes through the door of the flat in Kronberger Strasse 42 in Frankfurt, which covers a whole floor of the house, two broad-shouldered gentlemen with unmistakably Slav features suddenly appear on either side of him. They look the new arrival over with sinister politeness and help him take off his coat, so that he definitely gets the impression that they are unobtrusively searching him.

Even in the office, one has the feeling of being constantly watched. The entrance hall shows signs of some other security measures — a big placard with the telephone number of the police, a second telephone just beside the door and powerfully built men who sit with their eyes on the door while talks are going on.

The NTS Centre, one of about a hundred emigrant organisations in the Federal Republic, has its seat in Frankfurt. It has a somewhat special position, since it is one of the oldest and most active organisations dealing with the distribution of propaganda material and the smuggling of "revolutionaries" into the Soviet Union.

The NTS — "Nazionalno Trudowoj Sojus" (National Association of Toilers) — was founded in Belgrade in 1930. It has had a number of names during the course of its history, but these all began with the word "National", thus distinguishing themselves from communist "internationalism".

But in recent times the trend has been slowly away from national towards an international anti-communism. When at the end of January a slim gentleman left the Rhine-Main airport he could rub his hands together in satisfacion. It seemed as if the NTS had succeeded in establishing a "cover organisation" for the anti-communist forces. Vladimir Poremski had returned from a visit to Asia, where he had been warmly welcomed by vengeance-hungry Syngman Rhee and Formosa chief Chiang Kai-shek. He declared triumphantly in Frankfurt that local revolts such as that in Hungary would in future be senseless, and that work would be directed towards simultaneous revolt in all parts of the communist world.

The industrious NTS chief has brought under one roof quite a number of organisations who are busily spreading anti-communist propaganda and to some extent overstepping the line of what can justifiably be called propaganda. Groups in Greece, Burma (headquarters in Rangoon), Formosa, England, Japan, Denmark, North America and South America are represented. Germany contributes two questionable and slightly disreputable organisations: "The People's League for Peace and Freedom" (Bonn) and the "Fighting Group against Inhumanity", which has for some time been looked upon with considerable distrust by the Berlin Senate, and to whose activities not only the East German government has objected.

Frankfurt is to be the "centre of information and action".

The NTS had its big moment during the German-Russian war, and this war-time cooperation with the German occupation troops did for a time cripple the work after the war's end, but in the course of the cold war professional anti-communists regained importance as possible partners in the underground struggle. Money flowed more freely, as can be seen from the increasing number of leaflets and newspapers issued. The ideology has changed, however, and chairman Poremski now speaks of "democratic freedom".

When Soviet press chief Ilyichov presented "four American agents arrested on Soviet territory" at a foreign press conference in Moscow on February 6th 1957 the NTS in Frankfurt was understandably disturbed. All four of them had worked for NTS. Gleb Rahr, director of RAP (a sort of press bureau in NTS), described the careers of these four men.

The whole story sounds like a cheap novel and the facts are certainly even shadier than his description. The four young Russians were smuggled out of Germany to Algeria shortly after the war and then sent "on duty" to Russia. One can only guess how. Michael Kudriavzev, Nikolai Yakuta, Andrei Novikov and Vladimir Chmelnitzki, it was explained, had worked for quite a long time in Russia, and had distributed leaflets and propaganda material. The Soviet press chief stated that they had worked for the American secret service and had been smuggled in as spies. The four men gave long explanations of their activities. The interesting thing about the whole story is that a secret service organisation puts special value on recognition of these four "illegal workers" as members, either as spies or as mere propagandists. It will be difficult to discover the real truth about this case.

Alongside this unofficial section, NTS also has an official and public propaganda apparatus, only certain sections of which are kept strictly secret. Nearly 14 million leaflets were printed and distributed in 1955 alone — some of them allegedly in the Soviet Union. In the main it is probable, however, that this organisation also makes use of the popular propaganda balloon method — balloons sent up from the oh - so - sovereign territory of the Federal Republic — which is considerably less dangerous.

This all costs a great deal of money, for office expenses, for the often not at all inexpensive journeys of various chiefs and for the organisation of groups in the Soviet Union itself. If we ask where the money comes from, we get the cryptic reply: "Contributions from friends." But it looks as if these wealthy friends are investing sums of money quite out of proportion to the successes achieved in this work, unless one considers the constant stirring up of unrest as a success.

Other countries have other customs. When NTS members tried to make contact with sailors and officers of Soviet ships in Denmark and in Holland, they were deported to the Federal Republic. They returned to the Frankfurt centre empty-handed.

In the meantime the "Free Russia" radio transmittor gaily sends out "directions of the operational staff of NTS to revolutionary fighters in Russia", if one is to believe NTS claims. We are not told where the station is. But since it is said to be heard in Middle Germany (German Democratic Republic, ed.) we can well assume that it is on Federal German territory — and that it operates without a licence.

Now that Austria has full sovereignty and unity and is no longer open to the international managers of the cold war, it looks as if our country is becoming an Eldorado for secret services and emigrant organisations working underground.

(Condensed from "Frankfurter Rundschau", February 23rd, 1957)

Religion in East Germany II

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Father Paulus Dubianski was ordained in 1931, and was a priest in Brandenburg until 1943, when he was sent to a nazi concentration camp. He was liberated from Dachau in 1945 and has since been priest of the little town of Storkow in Brandenburg.

Question: Does the liberty to practice your religion — offices, processions etc. — exist in the German Democratic Republic?

Answer: These things are so customary here that I am surprised at your asking such a question. From 1945 to 1949 I was also Christian Democratic municipal councillor here and defended Christian interests on the council. Freedom of belief and conscience are inseparable from all true democracy.

I should like to tell you a little story in connection with processions. Each year on the Sunday following the Feast of the Lord there is a traditional Catholic procession. Last year this fell on May 31st — the day before International Children's Day, which is the occasion of a big open-air fête with booths, circus, and side-shows on the Market Place, over which our procession goes. What was to be done? I talked with Mayor Winkler, who is just as confirmed an atheist as I am a Catholic. We often disagree, but common concentration camp memories form a bond between us. (Winkler was in Buchenwald concentration camp for ten years.) We found a way out: the procession would take place as usual and the open-air fête would only start at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

It was an unusual sight to see those travelling circus people helping us to set up the altars in front of which the procession was to halt. And the procession passed between the stalls without losing any of its solemnity. This was the eleventh time that our Feast of the Lord procession passed over the market place without interference.

Until 1945 there had been no priest in Storkow. But since then Mass has been celebrated daily in our parish in two or three parts of the church.

Question: Is religious instruction given in the schools or elsewhere?

A baptismal ceremony in The Roman Catholic Colping Chapel in Leipzig

Answer: The priests give religious instruction as often as appears necessary, in schools or in private houses where there are no suitable church buildings, as far as these are placed at our disposal. (Brandenburg is 95% Protestant).

Question: Are there theological faculties and seminaries in the German Democratic Republic?

Answer: I have no special figures on this and can only tell you about the situation in my diocese. Our first seminary was opened in 1948 in Neuzelle on the Oder. It was reserved for students of theology who had had only one year of study before ordination. During the early years, too, most of the students came from West Germany.

We attach great importance to choosing students after matriculation, and a theological faculty was founded some years later in Erfurt. We also have an institute for older students in Magdeburg, where they can study for matriculation, thus qualifying for entry to the theological faculty. There is another seminary in Huysburg Castle in the diocese of Paderborn, I remember.

Question: How is charitable work organised?

Answer: We have two big public collections every year in our Republic, and the proceeds of one of these are devoted to charitable work. The priests are in charge of local distribution of charity. I believe there are very few really needy persons of whom we do not know and whom we have not helped.

I should say that, in general, far too little is known about religious life in the German Democratic Republic.

(Reprinted from "Nouvelles d'Allemagne", Berlin, March 1957)

THE MONEY SIDE

There are about 1000 students of theology in East German universities, studying under 37 professors, 8 lecturers and 51 assistant lecturers.

The state provides 4 million marks a year for these students, ie., 20,000 marks per student for a five-year study course. One and a half million marks a year are paid out in students' stipends and about half a million a year is spent on research work.

* * *

The government of the German Democratic Republic allocated the sum of 994,000 marks to the Catholic Church in 1956, excluding allocations made for the repair of churches.

"SOLDIER'S CALENDAR" AGAIN

Social Democrats Take Critical Look

(In previous years GERMAN REPORT has analysed the contents of the annual "German Soldiers' Calendar" published in West Germany. This year we leave the analysis to "Vorwaerts", official organ of the West German Social Democratic Party. The article reprinted below was published in "Vorwaerts" on March 22nd.)

It was to be expected that right-wing radicalism would come to the fore again in the Federal Republic along with the re-arming of West Germany, with the introduction of conscription, uniforms, barracks and manoeuvres. Officers and generals have always been nationalistic and only very seldom Socialist.

Anybody who did not know this already should take a look at the "German Soldiers' Calendar 1957", which is edited by Helmut Damerau and published by the Schild Verlag in Munich. Field Marshal von Manstein, in his introduction, calls this book, with its 220 pages of text liberally interspersed with advertisements, "a book of proud memories".

And this calendar is certainly full of memories. But what kind? We can turn over its pages from January to December — they are all memories of war, battles and victories. But they unfortunately do not go beyond 1942. What came after that date — countless losses, lost battles, senseless blood-letting, retreat, imprisonment, capitulation and collapse — all this has been forgotten by these gentlemen. They only remember the robber campaigns of the "greatest general of all times".

But the misery into which he finally led the German people is not mentioned in this "book of proud memories" — the misery which we, and especially our young people, must never forget and which we must bear continually in mind.

The German Soldiers' Calendar does the opposite. On July 20th, for instance, there is no mention of the German resistance movement. But we do learn when Colonel Galland won diamonds on his Oak-leaf Medal and when Reich Minister Todt crashed on the Eastern front. We read that on March 9th 1942 Adolf Hitler introduced a special medal for the destruction of tanks by individual soldiers, that on November 24th 1942 he issued the mad order to hold Stalingrad and on the 25th introduced a bar for hand-to-hand fighting. Neither does the Calendar forget to mention the dates of birth and death of generals of the Waffen SS and of ministers of the Third Reich. And then come innumerable battles, attacks, sieges, hand-to-hand fights — endless blood and death. Will this book also be available in the libraries of the new Federal Army?

In accordance with the basic line of its publishers, the Calendar of course treats the Hohenzollern, the ex-Kaiser, the nobles and everything Prussian in the friendliest way. Crown Prince Wilhelm even gets a full-page picture as a soldier. So it is not at all surprising that February 25th 1947 comes in for notice as follows: "Control Council Law No. 46 dissolved the province of Prussia on the grounds that it was 'always the centre of militarism and reaction'". Prussia has been dissolved, but the militarists and reactionaries are again gathering round such people as those who compiled this Calendar.

After the actual calendar section comes a big collection of pictures with text. The pictures are exclusively devoted to uniforms, generals, soldiers in action, battles, cannon, hand-to-hand fighting, heroic deaths on the battlefield; and amongst the short stories and reports you can find the whole SS-type literature gathered together.

It is clear where the readers of the calendar are to be found.

A four-page article on careers in the Federal Army shows signs of expert knowledge and was certainly contributed by the Defence Ministry's press department. The registration centres for volunteers in all six Army districts have not been forgotten either.

The last 32 pages of the Calendar are most revealing. They contain a list of all the Old Soldiers' Associations in the Federal Republic, as far as they are known to the editors. 1,158 Associations are included, each with name, address and telephone number and in most cases also with the name of the chairman. Not a single section of the Federal Army is missing — navy, air force, Waffen SS, fog troups, Panzer troups, scouts, information units, military schools, medical service, knight's cross holders, girl aides, labour corps men and girls; there is a place for everyone in the Associations. After all, we are in Germany, the paradise of clubs. Considering the fact that there are certainly a number of other Soldiers' Associations which still shun the light of day and are therefore not included, it would probably be no exaggeration to estimate the total number at 1200.

That is too many. We should neither exaggerate nor minimise the significance of the Soldiers' Associations; but there can be no doubt that they are the breeding ground of right-wing radicalism and reaction. The fact that they are there is an alarm signal. Since the present government ignores this alarm signal, it must be heard by all those who wish to save Germany from another catastrophe and to take action against it.

Nazis in the News

Werner Ventzki, recently appointed West Berlin representative of the West German Refugee Ministry. Herr Ventzki was nazi Lord Mayor of Lodz in occupied Poland, and bore direct responsibility for the liquidation of the Lodz ghetto and the death of an estimated 150,000 Jews.

Dr Lautz, former nazi attorney general attached to the "People's Court", now retired. The West German Social Democratic Press Service revealed early this year that Dr Lautz, who prosecuted hundreds of Socialist, Communist and other resistance figthers, is receiving a monthly pension from the West German state of over £120. After the war Dr Lautz was sentenced to ten years imprisonment for war crimes. Amnestied by the American authorities in 1951 he claimed, and received, his back pension for the time he had spent in jail.

LETTER BOX

SELF-SERVICE & SUPERMARTS

I was very much interested in your GERMAN REPORT of February 15th 1957, and in the article on "Women's Rights" and the difficulties that affect German working women.

I am a member of the Board of Management of the Nottingham Co-operative Society. Last year a delegation visited your East German Co-operative movement and we had the pleasure of receiving a delegation of East German cooperative workers later in the year.

Having heard the report of our delegation, especially on shopping facilities in East Germany, I can understand why the author of the article mentioned above writes that "shopping robs the women of their free time". I understand that you still have a shortage of consumer goods... May the day be not far distant when the artificial trade barriers between this country and East Germany fall, for this can only bring beneficial results to our two peoples... The delegation we received saw some of the latest developments in retail shopping in this country and were particularly impressed with our developments in Nottingham.

Since they were here we have opened a former cinema as a super market in one of Nottingham's suburbs. It is a joy to behold and, what is more, is owned by the members of our Society — as indeed are all our shops etc.

I say this because every new shop, every additional £ of sales by our movement, is a gain of a different type of organisation from private trade, and is therefore to be welcomed.

Your social system lends itself to a rapid development of modern methods of retailing and whatever progress has been made in this direction I am certain will be speeded up as a result of the energy and enthusiasm of your East German delegation to England last year.

I myself shall watch with interest the progress of the East German co-operative movement and so will many other cooperators in this country.

J. Painter, Nottingham

The editor replies:

Mr. Painter will be glad to learn that steps are being taken to improve the shopping situation in many ways. After a slow start, self-service stores and supermarkets are now being established in many places: in the Weissensee district of Berlin, for instance, a fine glossy new self-service market has won the hearts of local housewives, and the volume of business done there has jolted many self-satisfied retail trade officials who have been saying for years that "Our German housewives don't want this sort of thing." Similar stores are due to open in the near future in many other parts of Democratic Germany. The spread of self-service stores has also had the healthy effect of waking up the packaging branch of the food industry, which has for years been content to put out foodstuffs in dim grey packages which often give little information about what is inside them. Visits like that paid last year to Nottingham may well help to straighten out this problem too.

* * *

"On the sixth year of publication of your paper let me voice my appreciation of one aspect of your paper which seems to have come under some criticism — the great number of articles and reports on the semi-official support given in West Germany to neo-Nazism . . . You should be proud of the fact that I as an Israeli have to compliment you on that, as here at present most of the papers have gone into hiding as far as, for example, the nomination of Speidel is concerned."

A. Scheyer, Ramat Gan, Israel

BOOK CORNER

WAR'S END - PEACE'S BEGINNING

"Four Power Control in Germany and Austria 1945—1946" by Michael Balfour and John Mair. Oxford University Press. 48 shillings.

There were so many world problems to be solved in the two first years after World War Two that most people outside Germany could not devote much attention to what was going on in Germany; and in Germany itself communications were so bad, and newspapers so scarce that most people know little of what was happening outside their immediate vicinity.

This sober and well documented book, issued under the auspices of the London "Royal Institute of International Affairs" fills in some of the gaps. Mr. Michael Balfour himself served on the British Element of the Control Commission for Germany in the period dealt with, but he has made commendable efforts to be fair in dealing with the activities of the other three occupying powers. It is regrettable that he appears to have consulted very few documents setting out the "eastern" point of view on many of the problems dealt with, and that he has accepted at face value British and American press reports on East Germany which are of rather questionable validity. Despite these shortcomings the book is of considerable value to serious students of the German problem.

* * *

"Das Ende des Schreckens" ("The End of the Terror"). Documents selected by Erich Kuby. Sueddeutscher Verlag, Munich. Price 6.80 West German Marks. (In German).

From January to May 1945 Hitler's Germany was falling to pieces under the blows of the Allied armies attacking from the East and the West. Many people in West Germany today seem to have forgotten what happened then, and it is for these people in particular that the talented West German liberal journalist Erich Kuby has published this book. In his introduction Herr Kuby states: "It does no harm to recall how easily, and how far, it is possible for people to be led astray... One thing at any rate this book should give us: in looking back, we should find our present times less obvious, and we shall know how to weigh them more critically."

The book consists mainly of extracts from the nazi press and radio in the last four months of World War Two, supplemented by letters and eyewitness reports from concentration camps and prisons.

A very well selected and valuable book, of the greatest interest to all who read German.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

I suppose that every newspaper columnist comes sooner or later to curse the day when he started to write a regular column or feature, which has to be turned out whether he feels like it or not.

Spring Sun

That is a little bit how I feel today: outside the spring sun is shining brightly down on the ruins and bomb-sites on the other side of the Friedrich Strasse from my office, and here I am chewing my fingernails searching for a new theme. Theatre life in East Berlin — we've done it so often in the past. Something bright about what you can buy in the shops here? There is nothing particularly new to say about it. The shops have been pretty well-filled for the past year or two, so there is very little fresh on this point Criticism of some particularly bone-headed article about Democratic Germany in the millionaire press? My bone-headed colleagues don't seem to have produced any particularly outstanding new howlers recently, and most of the hardy annuals have been dealt with long ago in one of the previous 130-odd Berlin Notebooks I have written in the past five years.

So it seems that I am reduced to the last desperate resort of every writer who can't find a subject — a column about his desperation.

Let us have a look at what other columnists do when they reach this fix. American pundit Walter Lippmann has an easy out: he just puts in a note saying that he is taking leave to write a book: but on a lovely spring day like this I can't even think of something that I want to write a book about, even if I had the time and patience to do it.

Hardy Annuals

Other columnists have hardy annuals that they dig out of seclusion and present to their readers when they get into this fix. There is for instance Walter Holmes, who, poor man, is faced with the back-breaking task of producing a column six times a week for the London "Daily Worker", and not just once every two weeks like I do. He manages to maintain a very high standard with his flow of comments and marginal notes, but sometimes his material gets a little thin. What does he do?

Walter Holmes has one fine standby: Abyssinia. He was war correspondent with the Abyssinian forces during the 1935 war against the Italian fascist invaders: if I recall it rightly he had the perhaps unique experience of being correspondent of the "Daily Worker" and the London "Times" simultaneously. Anyway he has an apparently inexhaustible flow of reminiscences and anecdotes about his experiences there, and can always fling a few of them into his column if he begins to run dry.

"A Lovesome Thing"

Then there is Kingsley Martin, who has been turning out a very readable "London Diary" in the "New Statesman & Nation" for more years than I can count. When he begins to run out of copy he always introduces either quotations from his gardener, or reminiscences of one of his visits to Burma.

But this does not help me much: I have never been to Abyssinia or Burma, and I have no gardener. I did make some attempts to get some gardening notes into this column a year or two ago, but then a little while later some visitors from England who had read the column came and saw the partly-tamed small-scale wilderness which the garden really is, and uttered serious doubts as to whether I had really ever done the work there which I had described. So gardens would seem to be out.

True Story

Obviously the only thing left is to tell anecdotes, so I shall to recount a true happening which should please those readers who remember something about the European history of the past thirty years.

It took place in Warsaw in January 1947, just over ten years ago, at the time of the first post-war general elections. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, leader of the Peasant Party, who subsequently fled to the west, had called a press conference, and his small office was jammed to the doors with journalists from all over the world. I was there as the Warsaw correspondont of Reuters.

After the press conference had been underway for some time two American photographers, hung with cameras and light-meters like Christmas trees, forced their way into the room, and clambered over feet, chairs and tables to take their action shots. After disrupting the proceedings fairly effectively for some minutes with their flashes and blundering, one of them asked the room at large in a very loud hoarse whisper: "Say, which of these guys is Pilsudski?".

Letter from Adolf

But perhaps that is enough of this space filling. Let us turn to another true story, but this time it is something which happened just a week ago in West Germany.

A baker in the little town of Eislingen was rather astonished to receive through the post a letter from Adolf Hitler. One day early in March 1957 the postman brought him a registered package. He opened it, and was astounded to find that it contained an Iron Cross, and a gaudy document signed "Adolf Hitler, Fuehrer and Reich-Chancellor" conferring upon him this military decoration for "courageous conduct in the face of the enemy".

April Fool?

No, it was not a premature First of April joke: when he looked more closely he saw that the document was dated February 11th 1945 when he was still serving in Hitler's Wehrmacht. He had really been awarded the Iron Cross on that date, but it had never been delivered to him because of the confusion in the closing months of the war. Since then, some painstaking red-tape-minded bureaucrat in one of the West German offices dealing with the unfinished business left over by Hitler had been patiently tracking him down. At last he had been found, and his bloody emblem had been delivered.

The point of the story, of course, is that under a new West German regulation the baker from Eislingen will now be entitled to flaunt his medal when he goes to attend an old soldiers' rally — or when he is called up on the reserve of the new West German Wehrmacht.

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167/III Berlin W 8, Telephone 22 29 68. Printed in Germany by (36). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik